



GREENSBORO URBAN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Minutes of February 26, 2004

1:00 p.m. Greensboro, NC

Blue Room

(County Commissioners' Briefing Room)

Old Guilford County Courthouse

ATTENDANCE

Tyler Meyer	GDOT/MPO	Don Bryson	Martin-Alexiou-Bryson
Jeff Sovich	GDOT/MPO	Stephen Stansbery	Kimley-Horn Associates
Craig McKinney	GDOT/MPO	Mike Mills	NCDOT, Division 7
Peggy Holland	GDOT/MPO	Frank Wyatt	Greensboro Engineering & Inspections
Sharon Smiley	GTA	Bill Ball	Tindale-Oliver & Associates
Scott Rhine	PART	Mark Kirstner	Guilford County Planning
Bill Ruska	Greensboro Planning		

Tyler Meyer called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

Action Items

1. Approve Minutes of January 22, 2004

Frank Wyatt moved for approval of the minutes. Mark Kirstner seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes as prepared.

2. Amend FY 03 UPWP & FY 04 UPWP Timeline

Jeff Sovich advised that the Fiscal Year 2003-2004 UPWP is due to expire on June 30, 2004. Consequently, there is a need to amend in an additional \$150,000 in previously unobligated PL funds to support several planning studies which are currently under way, or which are planned to begin prior to the start of FY 04-05. The FY 04-05 UPWP, which will become effective on July 1, is currently under development and approval is anticipated to occur no later than the April TAC meeting. The requested action is to recommend that the TAC approve the amendment as presented.

Mark Kirstner moved to approve the resolution as presented; Frank Wyatt seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the resolution amending the FY 03-04 UPWP.

3. Amend Thoroughfare Plan

Jeff Sovich advised that the MPO has determined the need to add the Pegg Road – Thatcher Road Connector with a grade separated crossing of I-40 as a minor thoroughfare from West Market Street to Gallimore Dairy Road. Also, NCDOT has advised of the need to add existing Hornaday Road and the Hornaday Road Extension to Chimney Rock Road, with a grade separated crossing of the Western Urban Loop, as a minor thoroughfare. A required public comment period was held regarding these proposed amendments. The public comments received were generally in favor of the proposed changes. The requested action is to recommend that the TAC approve the amendments as presented.

Tyler Meyer advised that the feasibility study for the Hornaday Road Extension project is complete and design arrangements are pending. The feasibility study for the Pegg Road-Thatcher Road Connector is underway with the goal of creating a TIP project for its eventual construction.

Scott Rhine moved to approve the resolution as presented; Bill Ruska seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the resolution amending the Thoroughfare Plan.

4. Resolution of Support: Hornaday Road Extension TIP Project

Jeff Sovich advised that NCDOT has requested the MPO to formally establish support for a future TIP amendment, funding, and a project schedule for this proposed facility. Upon action by the TAC, NCDOT Division 7 will submit a formal TIP request to the TIP committee to review and set a schedule and funding. The proposed resolution expresses the MPO's support for future addition of this project to the TIP, and for any associated future TIP amendments needed to advance the project toward construction. The requested action is to approve the resolution as presented.

Frank Wyatt moved to approve the resolution as presented; Bill Ruska seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the resolution of support for the Hornaday Road Extension.

5. Approve MPO Priority Needs for FY 2006 – 2012 TIP

Jeff Sovich advised that the priority needs list for the FY 2006 – 2012 TIP has been under development since late 2003. MPO staff have developed the list in consultation with the TCC, including an extra work session, and in consideration of community input received during a transportation needs public meeting and comment period. The priority needs list consists of projects that have been identified as

MPO priorities for either new, accelerated, or increased funding. The priority needs list includes 4 investment components; Roadway System Needs, Bicycle and Pedestrian Needs, Public Transportation Needs, and Study Needs. The requested action is to recommend that the TAC approve the Priority Needs list for the 06-12 TIP as presented.

Bill Ruska moved to approve the resolution as presented; Mark Kirstner seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the resolution of support for the Hornaday Road Extension.

6. Approve FY 05 STP-DA Investment Package

Tyler Meyer advised that FHWA designated the Greensboro MPO as a TMA in 2001. This moved the Greensboro MPO into the company of other large MPOs, creating both challenges and opportunities. One of the opportunities is the authority to direct STP-DA funds, that are annually allocated to TMAs. Under current policies, NCDOT programs all STP funds in advance, without regard to STP-DA allocations, unless a TMA has taken specific action to direct those funds to other projects. Consequently, in order to direct its STP-DA allocation, an MPO must divert STP funds programmed for existing projects to other projects as it deems appropriate. The Greensboro MPO has previously indicated its intent to direct its annual STP-DA allocation, beginning with the 2006 – 2012 TIP cycle. Staff have worked with the NCDOT Program Development Branch to determine an appropriate method to direct the MPO's FY 05 STA-DA allocation and a suitable package of projects in which to invest those funds. The investment package presented today assumes that the FY 05 STP-DA allocation will equal that of FY 03. Additional funding could be added as result of the outcome of the surface transportation reauthorization, however this outcome remains unknown.

Staff have identified two existing projects from which STP funds could be diverted, while incurring only minimal delays. These two projects (R-2309AB, Horsepen Creek Road widening and R-2611, West Market Street widening) are programmed to begin near the end of fiscal year 2005 and 2009 respectively. Because both projects have a strong likelihood of experiencing ordinary project schedule delays, STP funds currently programmed in fiscal year 2005 can be freed by delaying the start of project R-2309AB by two months to October 2005 (FY 06), and by delaying the start of the construction phase of project R-2611 by three months to October 2009 (FY 10). By shifting these projects' schedules by just a few months, \$3.2 million in STP funds, approximately equal to Greensboro's estimated STP-DA allocation, becomes available for the MPO to program at its discretion. Staff have also identified a package of four projects to which to direct these funds: planning studies, 6 GTA expansion buses, the Battleground Rail-Trail, and priority sidewalk construction.

The next steps in this process include transmitting to the Program Development Branch the TAC's action to direct the STP-DA funds, further consultation with the Program Development Branch, and assessing STP-DA needs and opportunities for FY 06 and later. The requested action is to recommend that the TAC approve the STP-DA investment package for FY 05 as presented.

Frank Wyatt moved to approve the resolution as presented; Bill Ruska seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the resolution directing STP-DA funds for FY 2005.

7. Approve 2030 LRTP Proposed Conformity Projects List & LRTP Update

Tyler Meyer advised that much work has been done on the 2030 LRTP, including 2 rounds of public involvement, development of a draft collector streets plan and a draft thoroughfare plan. The main concerns that we've heard from the public have been that people want to see expansion and improvement transportation choices, while simultaneously maintaining and enhancing mobility and connectivity on area roadways. Through the analysis process, we have evaluated several alternative investment scenarios; the Existing Plus Committed scenario which focuses solely on the core projects

from the current LRTP and other projects that have received significant local commitments; the Highway Focus scenario that concentrates exclusively on roadway improvements and new construction; and the Alternative Focus Scenario, that involves heavy investment in public transportation improvements and assumes essentially no roadway improvements beyond the E + C Scenario. The results of the analysis show that none of these hypothetical extremes will be sufficient. Instead a more balanced approach is called for. In light of these findings, further development of the draft LRTP is under way and will be brought out for the third round of public involvement in April.

One key element that needs to move forward at present is the list of projects to be modeled for air quality conformity. The projects in this list center around widenings and new facilities, including all currently proposed regionally significant projects, but also include some other sorts of projects, such as rail grade separations and streetscape projects. While the regionally significant project components will be set after today's action, the MPO will retain the flexibility to add more minor projects (generally excluding widenings and new roadways) as LRTP development continues.

Don Bryson advised that the significant findings revealed by the modeling and analysis are that there are no obvious incentives for pursuing either the Highway Focus or the Alternative Focus scenario. Neither of these options produced much difference in terms of vehicle miles traveled or congestion levels. This leaves us free to base our decisions about the appropriate investment strategy upon factors such as community impacts, environmental impacts, cost, and others. Mr. Bryson then reviewed the projects included in the proposed draft Conformity Projects List, explaining the various changes that have been made in comparison to previous drafts, the current Thoroughfare Plan, and the current LRTP.

Preliminary modeling shows that the projects in this draft Conformity List will result in a slight increase in vehicle miles traveled, but will produce reductions in vehicle hours traveled and congestion levels. Because of these improvements, and because the analysis does not yet take into account the beneficial effects of planned future transit improvements, some level of emissions reduction can be expected. The next step will be to make final adjustments to this list and submit it to the interagency team. The interagency partners will then review and reach consensus as to whether all the needed capacity-adding and regionally significant projects have been included in the Conformity Projects List, and whether the detailed descriptive information for each project is accurate. The projects on the Conformity Projects List will be modeled and an analysis of their impacts on air quality will be conducted by NCDOT.

Tyler Meyer advised that staff continue to work with the consultant team to develop the proposed Thoroughfare Plan and the Collector Streets Plan and more information on these items will be presented in upcoming meetings. The requested action is to recommend that the TAC approve the conformity projects list for the 2030 LRTP as presented.

Frank Wyatt moved to approve the resolution as presented; Sharon Smiley seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the conformity projects list for the 2030 LRTP.

8. Approve MOU for Enhanced Regional Cooperation

Tyler Meyer advised that a memorandum of understanding for enhanced regional cooperation has been developed as a result of years of cooperative efforts between MPOs in the Triad and PART. More specifically, the MOU follows-up on the MPO boundary, structure, and governance review that was completed early in 2003. The Triad regional planning partners determined that it would be advantageous to formalize existing cooperative arrangements and to examine opportunities for future

enhancements through development of an MOU. This MOU also formalizes PART's current role and responsibilities in the regional transportation planning and programming processes. The requested action is to approve the resolution authorizing the TAC chair to sign the MOU as presented.

Mark Kirstner moved to approve the resolution as presented; Bill Ruska seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the TAC approve the conformity projects list for the 2030 LRTP.

Business / Potential Action Items

1. Mobility Greensboro Update

Bill Ball provided an overview summary of the Mobility Greensboro planning process, and advised that the process is nearly complete. The stated primary goal of the plan has been to double transit ridership in the next five years. By conducting an in-depth analysis of GTA's current conditions and services and engaging in an extensive visioning process, a series of draft recommendations has been developed for achieving the stated goal. Recommendations on marketing, security, capital, and staffing have been presented previously. Recommendations for service improvements and financial considerations are the focus of today's presentation.

The recommendations for service improvements consist of more frequent service, adding cross-town routes, adding park-and-ride lots, expanding evening service, and adding connector service to outlying areas. The short-range service plan adds three cross-town fixed bus routes, while the long range-service plan adds four more cross-town fixed bus routes. The financial analysis indicates that, assuming full implementation of the recommendations for achieving the 5 year goal, operating costs will increase from their present level of approximately \$7.1 million to around \$11.9 million in 2008 and \$17.2 million by 2009. During that same 5 year period, there will also be additional capital costs of approximately \$5.6 million in 2005 and \$24.6 million in 2009, beyond the current annual average of roughly \$3 million. Based on all current sources of revenue, GTA will experience a growing annual net deficit that would exceed \$10 million by 2009. Consequently additional sources of revenue are needed. Four options for increased revenue have been analyzed: establishing a motor pool tax for public transportation funding could generate \$100,000 annually; an increase in the cash fare rates could generate \$300,000 annually; levying a property tax for public transportation funding could generate \$2.6 million annually; and increasing the current millage rate of the sales tax for transportation funding to its maximum rate of ½ cent could generate \$6.9 million annually.

A Public Transportation Master Plan Draft Report is now available for public review and comment. The final report will be presented to the GTA Board during its April meeting.

2. Discussion of Upcoming Planning Study Needs

Tyler Meyer asked if any of the TCC members had thought of any additional future study needs that should be explored for inclusion in either the LRTP or the 2004-2005 UPWP. There were none.

3. MPO Strategic Reports

Tyler Meyer advised that a merger team meeting will be held soon, regarding the Battleground Avenue / US 220 widening project, in which the various permitting and resource agencies will confer to determine next steps in the process.

The State Highway Trust Fund Study Committee has convened its first meeting, and has scheduled a second meeting for mid-March.

The NC Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations is currently examining the PL funding distribution formula to make recommendations to NCDOT.

Other Items

1. TCC Member Report

Mike Mills advised that the southern Urban Loop / I-85 Bypass is now complete and opened to traffic on Saturday, February 21st. NCDOT is evaluating the need for various improvements to the signage at the interchanges.

The I-40 widening project continues to progress and is due to be complete in May.

The TCC adjourned at 2:38 p.m.